

Message Text

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PAGE 01 Lening 00852 140917Z
ACTION SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCA-01 EUR-12 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06
CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 SS-15 NSC-05 VO-03 /055 W
-----048710 141028Z /20

R 140846Z JUL 77
FM AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3300
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CASC, UR, CSCE
SUBJ: MARRIAGE CASES BAEHR AND MCKENZIE

REF: LENINGRAD 0792

1. STEVE BAEHR WAS MARRIED TO IRINA MESS ON SUNDAY, JULY 3. NEIL MCKENZIE WAS MARRIED TO OLGA VISYASHCHEVA ON THURSDAY, JULY 7. BOTH COUPLES WERE MARRIED WITHIN FOUR DAYS OF THE AMCIT FIANCE'S ARRIVAL IN LENINGRAD. BOTH REGISTRATION FORMALITIES AND THE CEREMONIES THEMSELVES WERE CONDUCTED EXPEDITIOUSLY AND PERFUNCTORILY. LIKE MACKENZIE, BAEHR HAS ALSO BEEN GRANTED A PRIVATE VISITOR'S VISA FOR A FORTY-DAY STAY WITH HIS SPOUSE. HE WAS MARRIED DURING THE PERIOD OF HIS TOURIST VISA AND HAS NOW DEPARTED TO HELSINKI TO AWAIT ACTUAL ISSUANCE OF PRIVATE VISA. HE WAS NOT CERTAIN WHETHER HE WILL WAIT IN HELSINKI OR LONDON.

2. COMMENT COINCIDENTAL TREATMENT OF THE TWO CASES BY SOVIETS INDICATE SOME DECISION TO BREAK LOG-JAM, BUT IT SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN AS INDICATION THAT THE
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RELATED PROBLEMS OF GETTING VISAS AND GETTING MARRIED WILL BE ANY EASIER IN LENINGRAD IN THE FUTURE. OCCASIONALLY SOME ONE DOES SUCCEED IN GETTING TO LENINGRAD AND GETTING MARRIED WITHOUT OUR DIRECT ASSISTANCE AS WAS THE CASE RECENTLY WITH NANCY JANE IFFLAND, WHOM CONSOFF MET SIX MONTHS AGO WHEN SHE APPLIED FOR A MARRIAGE "PERMISSION" FORM. SHE WAS

SUBSEQUENTLY NOT HEARD FROM UNTIL SHE SHOWED UP AGAIN TO ANNOUNCE SHE WAS MARRIED AND TO ENQUIRE ABOUT EMIGRATION PROCEDURES FOR HER SPOUSE PAVEL VIKTOROVICH PETROV. ON THE OTHER HAND, SHE REPORTED A VARIANT OF AN EARLIER RUMOR THAT THERE WOULD BE NO MORE MARRIAGES IN LENINGRAD BETWEEN FOREIGNERS AND SOVIET CITIZENS: VIZ. A LAW WAS BEING PROCESSED FORBIDDING SUCH MARRIAGES UNLESS THE FOREIGNER HAD SOME LONG-TERM RESIDENCE STATUS IN LENINGRAD SUCH AS BEING A EXCHANGE. DIPAGENCY SOURCE RECENTLY INFORMALLY DISCOUNTED SUCH A POSSIBILITY AND ASSURED CONGENOFF THAT THERE WILL BE "MANY" MARRIAGES IN THE FUTURE. HE AGREED THAT INCREASED TOURISM AND CONTACTS WILL MEAN MORE MARRIAGES, BUT QUALIFIED REMARK BY STIPULATING NOT OF TOURISTS WHO ARE HERE FOR "TWO DAYS". THUS WHILE THE SOVIETS MIGHT VERY WELL LIKE TO ENACT SUCH LEGAL RESTRICTIONS THEY PROBABLY HAVE NOT YET VENTURED TO DO SO AND WILL CONTINUE TO RELY ON NORMAL BUREAUCRATIC OBSTACLES AS THEY HAVE DONE IN PAST IN CASES OF MARRIAGES WHICH THEY DO NOT APPROVE. NEUBERT

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